

4 DEC 71

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Review on

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4 DEC 1991

REPORT CLASS ~~C O N F I D E N T I A L~~

COUNTRY : LAOS

DOI :

1.5(c)
3.4(b)(1)

SUBJECT : SIGHTINGS OF TWO U.S. PILOTS CAPTURED BY PATHET LAO FORCES IN SAM NEUA PROVINCE

ACQ : LAOS, VIENTIANE

SOURCE :

1.5(c)
3.4(b)(1)

SUMMARY. ON OR ABOUT 4 MAY 1965 A U.S. PILOT WAS CAPTURED BY PATHET LAO (PL) TROOPS NEAR THE PL SUPREME COMMAND HEAD-QUARTERS CAVE. HE WAS INTERROGATED AND THEN DETAINED AT UNKNOWN LOCATIONS IN SAM NEUA PROVINCE. ANOTHER U.S. PILOT WAS LATER CAPTURED IN THE VICINITY OF MUONG POUA AND BROUGHT TO THE SAME DETENTION AREA. END SUMMARY.

1. ON OR ABOUT 4 MAY 1965 A U.S. PILOT WAS CAPTURED BY PATHET LAO (PL) TROOPS ON THE THIRD DAY OF A BOMBING ATTACK IN AN AREA APPROXIMATELY ONE KILOMETER NORTH OF THE PL SUPREME COMMAND HEADQUARTERS (HQS) CAVE. WHILE APPROXIMATELY TEN U.S. JET AIRCRAFT CIRCLED OVER THE AREA WHERE THE PILOT HAD LANDED AFTER PARACHUTING FROM HIS BURNING AIRCRAFT, A U.S. HELICOPTER ATTEMPTED TO RESCUE HIM. PL SOLDIERS, HOWEVER, CAPTURED THE PILOT BEFORE THE HELICOPTER ARRIVED. THE PILOT WAS OVER 68 INCHES TALL, MEDIUM BUILD, AND CLEAN SHAVEN. HE HAD A LONG FACE AND SHORT, LIGHT COLORED HAIR. HE WAS BROUGHT TO THE PL SUPREME COMMAND HQS CAVE AND THEN TAKEN TO AN UNKNOWN LOCATION FOR INTERROGATION. THE INTERROGATION WAS

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CONDUCTED BY A LAO WHO USED AS AN INTERPRETER A FOREIGN STUDENT WHO SPOKE ENGLISH AND WHO WAS BORROWED FROM THE NLMS CENTER. AFTER THE INTERROGATION THE PILOT WAS DETAINED AT AN UNKNOWN LOCATION IN SAM NEUA PROVINCE.

2. (FIELD COMMENT: RALLIER

SUBSOURCE

A

SSD

SUBSOURCE DATA

IDENTIFIED THE LOCATION OF THE PL SUPREME COMMAND CAVE AT VH-194565 FROM AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS. ANALYSIS OF PHOTOGRAPHY DATED 10 SEPTEMBER 1971 HAS REVEALED A CAVE LOCATED AT VH-194565. THIS CAVE HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED AS THE HEADQUARTERS.)

VH 194565

3. COLONEL CHANH-KOR, AT THAT TIME DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE POLITICAL OFFICE OF THE SUPREME COMMAND HQS AND CHIEF OF THAT OFFICE'S PERSONNEL SECTION, SAID IN A CASUAL CONVERSATION THAT WHEN THE PILOT WAS ASKED ABOUT TACTICAL MILITARY INFORMATION, HE SAID HE KNEW NOTHING. HE TOLD THE INTERROGATOR TO ASK THE U.S. GOVERNMENT FOR THE ANSWERS TO THOSE QUESTIONS. WHEN ASKED WHAT HE WAS THINKING ABOUT WITH REGARD TO HIS CAPTURE, THE PILOT SAID THAT HE THOUGHT MOSTLY ABOUT HIS WIFE AND SON. HE GAVE HIS AGE AS 36 AND SAID THAT HIS SON WAS 15 YEARS OLD. (FIELD COMMENT: CHANH-KOR IS PROBABLY IDENTIFIABLE WITH MAJOR (CHAN) KOR WHO WAS IDENTIFIED BY A RALLIER IN SEPTEMBER 1968 AS THE THIRD DEPUTY IN CHARGE OF PERSONNEL OF THE POLITICAL DIVISION AT SAM NEUA.)

4. TWO OR THREE MONTHS LATER ANOTHER U.S. PILOT WAS CAPTURED IN THE VICINITY OF MUONG POUA. (FIELD COMMENT: A MUONG POUA IS LOCATED AT VH 2264.) COLONEL CHANH-KOR SAID THAT THIS PILOT HAD BEEN BROUGHT TO THE SAME DETENTION AREA AS THE FIRST PILOT. (FIELD COMMENT: SC WAS SHOWN PHOTOGRAPHS OF APPROXIMATELY 30 AMERICANS IN THE OFFICIAL POW PHOTOGRAPH BOOK, INCLUDING CAPTAIN DAVID LOUIS HRDLICKA WHO CRASHED IN AN F105 ON 18 MAY 1965 IN THE VICINITY OF VH 200539 AND CAPTAIN CHARLES E. SHELTON WHO CRASHED IN AN RF101C AT UG 991632 ON 29 MAY 1965. [REDACTED] COULD IDENTIFY NO PHOTOGRAPH AS THE PILOT [REDACTED] SAW IN 1965. WHEN ASKED IF ANY OF THE FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS ON THE PAGE WITH HRDLICKA'S PHOTOGRAPH LOOKED SIMILAR TO THE PILOT [REDACTED] SAW, [REDACTED] GAVE A NEGATIVE REPLY. WHEN ASKED IF ANY PHOTOGRAPHS ON THE PAGE WITH SHELTON'S PHOTOGRAPH RESEMBLED THE PILOT, [REDACTED] POINTED TO SHELTON BUT SAID THAT THE MAN [REDACTED] SAW HAD A VERY FLAT NOSE BRIDGE AND THAT WHILE SHELTON'S HAIR AND FACE SHAPE WERE SIMILAR, HE WAS NOT THE PILOT [REDACTED] REMEMBERED.)

VH 2264

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5. ABOUT ONE MONTH AFTER THE SECOND PILOT WAS CAPTURED, PL CAPTAIN KU-THONG, WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE IMPRISONED PILOTS, CAME TO THE SUPREME COMMAND HQS CAVE AND WAS OVERHEARD TO TELL SAMAN, WHO AT THAT TIME WAS 1ST DEPUTY SUPREME COMMANDER OF PL FORCES AND CHIEF OF THE SUPREME COMMAND POLITICAL OFFICER, THAT THE PILOTS WERE HAVING DIFFICULTY ADJUSTING TO A DIET OF LAO FOOD. SAMAN TOLD KU-THONG TO TRY DIFFERENT FOODS IN ORDER TO FIND OUT WHAT THE PILOTS COULD EAT. HE SUGGESTED CHICKEN, SUGAR AND MILK. HE TOLD KU-THONG TO ASK THE PILOTS WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO EAT AND THEN TO REQUISITION THE FOOD FROM THE QUARTERMASTER OFFICE.

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(FIELD COMMENT: KU-THONG MAY BE IDENTICAL

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WITH THONGKHAM WHO IS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN POLICE CHIEF IN XIENG KHOUANG PROVINCE AND WHO WAS TRANSFERRED TO HOUA PHAN PROVINCE IN LATE 1968. IN LATE 1971 THONGKHAM REPORTEDLY WAS CHIEF OF THE SECURITY OFFICE IN THE NAKAY AREA (VH 1865). SAMAN MAY BE SAMAN VIRAKHET WHO IS CONFIRMED AS SUPREME COMMANDER OF THE SOUTH LAOS REGION (SLR) HQS AND WHO SUCCEEDED GENERAL P H O M M A DOUANGMALA IN PROBABLY MAY 1971. SAMAN VIRAKHET FORMERLY WAS DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE HQS OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY AND CHIEF OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF THE XIENG KHOUANG REGIONAL HQS.)

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7. FIELD DISSEM: STATE ARMY AIR CINCPAC ARPAC PACAF
PACFLT MACV 7TH AF 7/13TH AF TFA/NKP (ALSO SENT [REDACTED])
SAIGON [REDACTED]

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